

Theodicy

theos (God) + dike (justice)

The problem of a just God and an evil world

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| God's consistency? | Love your enemy The wrath of God |
| God's fairness in this life? | How can a loving God command genocide? |
| God's fairness in eternity? | How can a loving God send anyone to Hell? |

Partial explanations

1. A response to the severity of human depravity.
2. An expression of a gradual disclosure of the divine nature.
3. Shared parts of ancient culture.
4. An example of accommodation to human nature.
5. A prerogative that only God can exercise in His wisdom.

6. A part of the bigger story of human redemption.

Luke 24

"45 Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, 46 and He said to them, 'Thus it is written, that **the Christ would suffer** and rise again from the dead the third day. 47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all nations.'"

The wrath of God in the Old Testament is a picture of the Cross of Christ in the New Testament.

1. Three great imputations in Scripture
2. The language of Jesus' crucifixion (Isa.53:4-12)
3. The great exchange (2 Cor.5:21)
4. Propitiation (Rom.3:25)
5. Biblical "types" (Col.2:16-17)



The same “wrathful” language is used to describe the fate of Messiah

Isaiah 53

“4 Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him **stricken by God, smitten by him**, and afflicted. 5 But he was **pierced** for our transgressions, he was **crushed** for our iniquities; the **punishment** that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. 6 . . . the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. . . . 12 . . . For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”

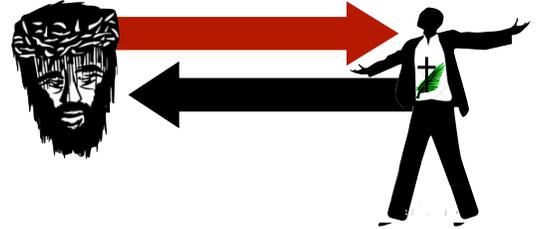
Luke 24:26

“Was it not **necessary for the Christ to suffer these things** and to enter into His glory?”

The great exchange

2 Corinthians 5:21

“He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”



Propitiation

The satisfaction of the just wrath of God.

Propitiation is a two-part act that involves

- 1) appeasing the wrath of an offended person and
- 2) being reconciled to him.

Romans 3

“²⁴ Being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; ²⁵ whom God displayed publicly as a **propitiation** in His blood through faith.”

Hebrews 2:17

“Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make **propitiation** for the sins of the people.”

1 John 2:2

“And He Himself is the **propitiation** for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.”

1 John 4:10

“In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the **propitiation** for our sins.”

How are we to deal with Biblical contradictions?

| Paradox (enigma) | Puzzle (mystery) | Paradigm (myth) | Picture (type) |
|------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| Truths that defy logic | Truths that are logical once all the information is known | Truths that are a story-guide to life | Truths that represent a “shadow of what is to come |
| Trinity | Church (Jew & Gentile) | The sin of Adam & Eve | Tabernacle |
| Accept | Wait | Personalize | Learn |

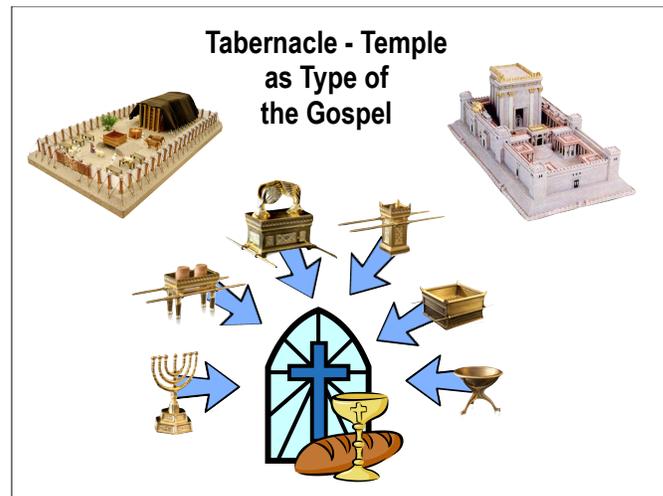
Colossians 2

“¹⁶ Therefore let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day - ¹⁷ things which are a **mere shadow of what is to come**; but the substance belongs to Christ.”

Hebrews 10:1

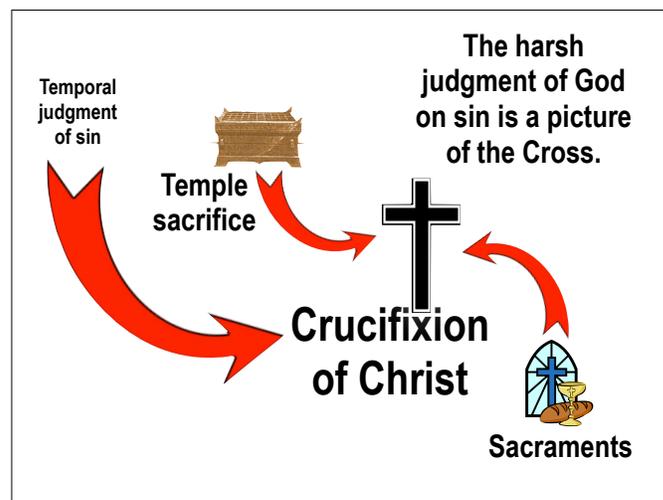
“For the Law, since it has **only a shadow of the good things to come** and not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near.”

| <i>Midrash / Type</i> | Joseph | Jesus |
|-------------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Loved by father | Gen.37:3 | John 3:35 |
| A shepherd | Gen.37:2 | John 10:11-14 |
| Sent by father to brethren | Gen.37:13-14 | John 1:11 |
| Hated by his brethren | Gen.37:4,5,8 | John 15:25 |
| Betrayed by brothers | Gen.37:18-24 | John 11:53 |
| Stripped of his coat | Gen.37:23 | John 19:23-24 |
| Cast into a pit | Gen.37:24 | Luke 23:50-55 |
| Sold for the price of a slave | Gen.37:28 | Matthew 26:15 |
| Suffered because of brethren | Gen.39:1-40:13 | Matthew 27:33-35 |
| Tempted | Gen.39:7 | Matthew 4:1-11 |
| Offered no defense | Gen.39:20 | John 18:19-38 |
| Given glory after suffering | Gen.41:14,41 | Luke 24:13-27 |



John 1:29
 “Behold, the **Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!**”

Hebrews 9:12
 “¹³ For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, ¹⁴ how much more will **the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience** from dead works to serve the living God?”



The wrath of God in the Old Testament reveals the seriousness of human sin and the crucifixion of Christ.

“The life Christ lived qualified Him for the death He died—and the death He died qualifies us for the life we live.”

Those who stumble at the wrath of God in Deuteronomy must also stumble at the wrath of God in the crucifixion of Messiah.

“Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense, and he who believes in Him will not be disappointed.” Rom.9:33

- Lessons*
- 1. All Scripture is written for us but not to us or about us.**
 - 2. The harsh wrath of God in the Bible is not an embarrassing ethical error left over from a primitive culture.**
 - 3. Nor is it a guide for our behavior today.**
 - 4. It is a picture of God’s utter hatred of sin that gives us a unique and powerful perspective of the crucifixion of Jesus and the propitiation for our sins.**